The MPACT Initiative: Using Behavioral Tools to Improve Children’s Early Math Skills

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Participant children start preschool behind other students

![Graph showing distribution of Z-scores](image)
They rank in the 23rd percentile
Our goal is to help parents and close the achievement gap.

Problem: Underserved children arrive at school behind in math skills and they hardly catch up to more advantaged students.

A few possible reasons:

- Lack of information, materials, or skills.
- Present bias: the tendency to under-value future payoff $\Rightarrow$ lower parental investment.
- Fixed mindset: belief that skills are set at birth and fixed.
The Math for Parents and Children Together (MPACT) Initiative

1. MPACT early math videos
2. MPACT field experiment

Mayer, Kalil & Delgado (UChicago)

Promising Math 2019
The Math for Parents and Children Together (MPACT) Initiative

1. MPACT early math videos
   - 6 videos
   - English and Spanish
   - Link to videos

2. MPACT field experiment
   - In the field until March 2020
   - English and Spanish


- **MKit only**: Booklet with math activities.
- **MKit + present bias**: Booklet + text messages to overcome present bias.
- **MKit + growth mindset**: Booklet + text messages with growth mindset content.
- **Tablet**: Tablet with math apps.
Recruitment: 1,458 children in 29 Head Start centers
Thank you!

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